When Jesus blessed for
Jerusalem

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Lk.9:51-56 When Jesus headed for Jerusalem.

This incident in the life of Him who had not where to lay His head yields to the meditative mind much food for thot. The life of Christ was full of such experiences, but I have chosen this one because the Master's turning toward Jerusalem on His way to lay down His life for the sins of the world is a good and timely consideration for our entrance into the lenten season.

I. The first thing to notice in this story is the village that turned Christ down.

Under any circumstances an ugly thing to do, but at this particular time it was doubly more so. Jesus on his way to Calvary, to make atonement, to reconcile man to God and men to each other, to tear down walls of suspicion, national jealousy and race prejudice, and make the world friendly and brotherly.

Facing the Cross was not easy for Christ. He set aside ease and popularity and "steadfastly set his face". This man, asking for lodging for the night was none other than the World's Redeemer on the last lap of his journey to Crucifixion.

He must have lodging for the night for he was tired and dusty and hungry and it was the close of day. And so the disciples went ahead and made suitable arrangements.

The village they entered was Samaritan, and the Samaritans had no dealings with the Jews. But the disciples not asking for much probably completed satisfactory arrangements.

But when Jesus arrived and they saw his set face they turned him down. They treated him as if he were a common tramp. They ordered him to "move on".

By the way this is the slogan of municipal selfushness, village isolation and human provincialism- "Move on".

Because the Samaritans hated the Jews and despised Jerusalem they refused to give shelter to this tired out man. Because this man would not hate the people

2. they hated and share with them their prejudices and jealousies they ordered him out of town.

Japanese in Readers Digest

Theire are Christian people today that are not far different from these Samaritans. The price they ask for their friendship is the adoption of their hatreds and prejudices. You must believe just as they do or get out.

The pastor who tried to serve a church split into factions. He had to get out.

The village lost Jesus. And it remained the mean and sordid and squalid place that it was. Dirty, dark, and full of hatred and suspicion, as if the Lord of Light had never walked its streets. It might have had heaven, but it shut Christ out.

The King of Glory comes our way, the Christ of Calvary, the friend of sinners, the great-hearted Son of Man comes to enrich our lives -But there is someone in the church we do not like, some practice we disapprove, some doctrine we cannot accept, some individual against whom we cherish an ~~ancient~~ gridge. Because of this we turn Christ down.

Thus the village lost its great opportunity. Christ could'nt bless that town. Think of the other Samaritan town which Jesus did bless thru the woman at Jacob's well! What a contrast. It mattered not to that town that Jesus was a Jew. Here was a man who could heal them and help them And Jesus did. But in this Samaritan village prejudice barred the door. And today sectarianism, sectionalism, race hatred, prejudices built on color and class and caste, petty feuds, close the door against Christ. To rise above it all and welcome and entertain the heavenly Guest should be our constant prayer.

II. Next inthe story come the fire-eaters.

The disciples were naturally indignant. Jesus had been insulted. It was an outrage. They would not treat a dog the way this dirty little Samaritan village was t treating their Master. Well, I would'nt have much respect for the disciples had they failed to be indignant.

Two of them were worse than indignant- they waxed into a towering rage. This village should be wiped off the face of the earth. These people do not deserv to live. They are a disgrace to the country. "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire from heaven and consume them even as Elias did?"

The particular two of the disciples surprise us.

"The Sons of Thunder"

James and John. James, the self-poised judicial counsellor, and John the gentle, sweet-spirited apostle of love, the man who wrote, "Little children, love one another "

These are the men who would burn the town down. Surprising?, yet not so much when you stop to think that when a gentle soul is once aroused and its love becomes enraged there is no storm that can equal it. They command the elements. They are in a class with with Elijah. They only need Christ's permission and they will burn the world with fire and brimstone!

Good people seem to have a partiality for this remedy. They are those who like the codtrine of hell. It guarantees that their enemies will get their full deserts. It is a comforting doctrine for those who are notmgoing that particular way. Burn them! Exterminate them! Excommunicate them! They are not fit to liv live! Let them be anathema!

James and John are not alone in the Bible. David in the psalms says some rough things about the enemies of Israhl. There is Paul who loved to interpret Xty in military fashion. "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints".

Yet militant Xty may easily be overdone. Christ conguers his enemies with love. Controversy never saved a soul.

Dr. Hall once wrote a beautiful tract entitled, Come to Jesus". He afterwards became engaged in a controversy and wrote a severe a denunciation of his antagonist. A friend suggested that Dr. Hall name the attack, "Go to Hell" by the author of "Come to Jesus."

It is not the fire-eaters who build the Kingdom of God.

III. And they went to another village.

This was Christ's answer to his disciples. He rebuked them. And this was not easy to do because he must have appreciated thori loyalty and devotion to him.

It took a broad mind and a clear head to rise abo above this situation, and insist that the disciples even under such provocation act fair and gentle.

Christ's kingdom was not to be established by fire. And the master turned and rebuked them and said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the Son of Man is not come todestroy men's lives, but to save them

But the real answer of Jesus was not what he said but what he did. He went to another village. The village that turned him down was not the only

3. villlage. Without a word Christ left the village, still going to Jerusalem, to Calvary.

What a picture of greatness! Christ rising above the little jealousies and revenges of earth! He scores selfushness and hate and pleads for tplerance and love.

Christ's example is a fitting rebuke torabbid denominationalism, bigorty and intolerance. A rebuke of that blind zeal which lights martyrs fires and kindles faggots of hate.

And as they journeyed slowly to that other village, I wonder what the disciples thot about. Perhaps they recalled the Sermon on the Mountk remembering how Jesus said, "Blessed are the gentle for theirs is the Kindgom of heaven"

It is something to stand on our rights, but X's true followers think sot so much of their rights as they do of their duties. It is something to command fire from heaven, as did Elijah, but it is greater for one to deny himself, take up his cross and follow Jesus. It is something to smite the enemy hip and thigh, but it is greater to bear one another's burd burdens. It is something to burn a town, But it is more Godlike to save a world!